

Lafayette City Council Report

Submitted by: Lamorinda Spirit Van Program, City of Lafayette

February 11, 2008

1. Introduction

We understand the Lamorinda Spirit Van Program is an Enterprise Program with limited support from the City of Lafayette. The City of Lafayette has graciously funded the program as follows:

- 2005-2006 \$35,000
- 2006-2007 \$25,000
- 2007-2008 \$25,000

The goal is for the Lamorinda Spirit Van Program to be self-sufficient through securing funding.

- We actively solicit funding from foundations, the Lamorinda cities of Lafayette, Orinda, and Moraga, service groups, and Lamorinda citizens.
- We also raise money through businesses advertising on the van, through passenger fares, fund raisers, invoicing the Contra Costa Nutrition Project, and through renting out the van for community events.

We request that the City of Lafayette continue to fund this program with \$25,000 for 2008-2009.

2. The program is working. Here are our successes:

- Three volunteer drivers drive our older citizens to meet their errand and shopping needs in Lafayette on Tuesdays, in Orinda on alternate Wednesdays, and in Moraga on Thursdays.
- We have recently added monthly Friday trips to Sun Valley Mall in Concord and Broadway Plaza in Walnut Creek as well as to concerts at the Lafayette Community Center and a scheduled February trip to lunch and a movie in Walnut Creek. Our lunch driver occasionally takes passengers to fun spots like the Oakland Zoo, Mt. Diablo, and the Alexander Lindsay Wild Life Museum. We hope to expand these much appreciated outings.
- **Customer satisfaction:** We continuously hear positive remarks about our drivers:
 - “The drivers are wonderful. They carry my groceries.”

- “He is so caring. He reminds me to lock the door and pick up my keys.”
- “I don’t know what I would do without this service.”
- “I was house bound before the van.”
- “I appreciate the expansion of services.”
- “I’m looking forward to medical rides.”

Month	Rides per month Fiscal Years 2006- 2007	Rides per month Fiscal Years 2007-2008
July	116	201
August	157	223
September	150	201
October	120	198
November	127	168
December	111	164
January	185	
February	160	
March	170	
April	185	
May	210	
June	203	
Total Rides	2104	1155
Average per month	175	193

- **Community support**

- Our Advisory Committee is composed of members from all three of the Lamorinda communities we serve: Lafayette, Orinda, and Moraga. The Committee is actively involved in doing what is needed to keep us running and has participated in approaching the City Councils of Moraga and Orinda to share in the mutual effort to sustain and expand this vital service.
- Volunteers have come forward to provide support in the office, accounting expertise, and help with event planning and implementation.
- The Contra Costa County Transit Authority informally advised us that we would receive one or two additional vans in the Fall of 2008. This will allow us to provide medical trips to Lamorinda seniors and persons with disabilities, taking them to Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, and Concord.

- We have been successful in raising funds.

Revenue	Budget	Actual through December, 2007
Fares	\$ 3,240	\$1,639.40
CCC Transit Authority	\$ 5,000	\$5,000
Van Advertising	\$ 5,700	\$2,500
Moraga Jr. Women's Cub	\$ 12,000	Projected up to \$15,000
Lafayette Community Foundation	\$ 5,000	\$5,000
City of Lafayette	\$ 25,000	Committed
Town of Moraga		\$5,000
Donations	\$ 2,500	\$2,500
Fund Raiser	\$ 550	\$550
East Bay Community Foundation		\$5,000 Committed 2008
Revenue Sub Total	\$ 68,990	
Fund Balance from 2006-2007	\$ 36,738	
Total Revenue	\$100,728	\$15,329.40 per City Records in December

- Our expenses are well within our budget.

3. How we are serving Lafayette, Orinda, and Moraga

- **Our side panel advertising currently supports the cities with the message "Shop Lamorinda."**
- **Community Groups** such as the Lafayette Community Center and Little League occasionally utilize our van to transport people to parking. The Chamber of Commerce uses our van to transport people from BART to downtown Lafayette during the Lafayette Art and Wine Festival. The Moraga Recreation Department recently requested the use of our van and a driver to take their seniors to a day in San Francisco. With the one van, however, we were unable to meet this particular request.
- **Lunch Trips for isolated seniors:** Through the van which seats eight people and one person in a wheelchair, we take seniors to the C.C. Café at the Walnut Creek Senior Center for lunch Monday through Friday at no cost to the passenger. This is an opportunity for house-bound seniors to not only enjoy a nutritious meal at very low cost (\$2.00), but also to get out of the house to meet and socialize with new people, much enriching their daily lives.
- **Essential Errands and Shopping for seniors who no longer can drive:** Besides the lunch program, we take our passengers shopping and to manage some of the routine errands of daily living. On Tuesday afternoons, we drive Lafayette seniors to their errands in Lafayette, taking them to Safeway, Trader Joe's, Diablo

Foods, Longs Drugs, the bank, post office, and occasionally to hair and medical appointments. On Thursday afternoons, we drive Moraga seniors to similar errands in Moraga and often to Trader Joe's in Lafayette. We recently added Orinda Errand Day on alternate Wednesdays. For this service, we charge \$6.00 for a round trip and \$3.00 for the occasional one-way trip, a fee that in no way covers the cost of the transportation.

- **Medical Appointments for seniors and people with disabilities:** The van program is particularly well-suited to outings for groups. In the future, we hope to acquire a second van. We will then be able to take seniors to their medical appointments in Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, and Concord as well as be able to remain in service when a van undergoes its required 45-day maintenance program or is needed for a potential volunteer driver to take his/her DMV Class B test

4. Goals

- We propose accepting the one or two vans that have been informally promised to us by the Contra Costa County Transit Authority so that we may take seniors and people with disabilities to medical appointments, something that we can only occasionally do now. (With the receipt of one van, we will be able to offer medical rides. With the receipt of two vans, we will have a back-up van to be used when one is being serviced, to take potential volunteer drivers to the DMV for testing, to have available to rent out as needed for community requests.)
- We propose continuing to research, solicit, and secure additional funding so that we can meet the program needs while being financially self-sufficient, i.e. it is not our intention to request more than the current level of support from the City of Lafayette.
- Based on the amount of funding actually secured or committed, we propose adding either a half-time paid driver or full-time paid driver to our staff. We understand this is a year by year effort and believe we can secure the funding.
- We are looking into becoming a 501c3 organization to enhance our fund raising capabilities. Certain funding sources are not open to us without taking this step including having cars donated to our program.
- We continue to recruit volunteer drivers to reduce our costs. We currently have two potential drivers who have agreed to prepare for the DMV tests.
- We continue to advocate for ways to modify the van so it only requires a Class C license.

- Again, depending on funding secured or committed, we propose bringing the paid driver(s) hourly rate up from \$12.00 an hour to \$15.00 an hour so that we can attract and keep quality employees to serve our fragile senior population.
- Also depending on funding secured or committed, we propose bringing the program coordinator's hourly rate up from \$20 an hour to \$25 an hour. This position is currently budgeted for 30 hours a week.
- With the arrival of the second van, our dispatcher's hours will go back up to the originally budgeted 12 hours a week. We are paying the dispatcher \$15 an hour.

Thank you for considering our report and goals.

Sincerely,

Mary Bruns
Program Coordinator
Lamorinda Senior Transportation and
Lamorinda Spirit Van Program
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